Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any cancelled claims at a later date.

1.-12 (canceled)

13.   (new) A network configuration for substitute-switching of a switching system, comprising:

a first switching system having access to a transmission network and active from a switching perspective;

a redundant switching system assigned as a redundancy partner to the first switching system, the redundant switching system having access to the transmission network and is inactive from a switching perspective; and

a network management system operatively connected to the first and redundant switching systems;

a real-time monitor operatively connected to the first and redundant switching systems and the transmission network, when a communication to the first switching system fails the real-time monitor causes the redundancy partner to become active from a switching perspective.

14.   (new) The configuration according to claim 13, further comprising a plurality of real-time monitors operatively connected to each other.

15.   (new) The configuration according to claim 13, wherein first and redundant switching systems have packet base interfaces.

16.   (new) The configuration according to claim 15, wherein the first and redundant switching systems have the same packet addresses for the packet-based interfaces.

17.   (new) The configuration according to claim 13, wherein the first and redundant switching systems each comprising a database having substantially the same permanent and semi-permanent data.

18. (new) The configuration according to claim 17,

wherein permanent data is data that may only be modified via a software upgrade or a software patch,

wherein semi-permanent data is data entered via a user interface, and

wherein the permanent and semi-permanent data do not include transient data related to a call.

19. (new) The configuration according to claim 17, wherein the first and redundant switching systems have the same hardware and identical software.

20. (new) The configuration according to claim 19, wherein the identical software includes the same software release and software patches.

21. (new) The configuration according to claim 19, wherein the first switching system, the redundant switching system, the network management system and the real-time monitor reside at different geographical locations.

22. (new) The configuration according to claim 17, wherein the redundant switching system is in an operating state such that all outward-switching-oriented packet-based interfaces are blocked and the system includes active applications.

23. (new) The configuration according to claim 13, wherein the first and redundant switching systems include packet-based interfaces having the same packet addresses.

24. (new) The configuration according to claim 13, wherein the transmission network has a cross-connect device that is controlled by the network management for switching TDM connections.

25. (new) The configuration according to claim 13, wherein the transmission network has a cross-connect device that is controlled by the monitor for switching TDM connections.

26. (new) The configuration according to claim 13, wherein the transmission network has a direct communications interface between the first switching system and the redundant switching system.

27. (new) The configuration according to claim 13, wherein the first switching system, the redundant switching system, the network management system and the monitor reside at different geographical locations.

28. (new) A system for monitoring redundant switching system, comprising:

a communication link to a first switching system that is active from a switching perspective;

a communication link to a redundant switching system that is inactive from a switching perspective and that includes substantially the same permanent and semi-permanent data; and

a monitor having real time switch over mechanism that causes the redundant switching system to become active after a failure of the first switching system.

29. (new) The system according to claim 28, further comprising a plurality of monitors that monitor each other and that coordinate the switch over.

30. (new) The system according to claim 29, wherein the monitors do not switch between paired-redundancy switching systems in the event of faulted intercommunication.